

Message Text

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ORIGIN PA-02

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UNCLAS STATE 201670 TOSEC 090116

FOR HODDING CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SOPN, OVIP (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: NEWSWEEK ARTICLE ON CHINA

NO. 9

HEREWITH EXCERPT FROM ARTICLE IN NEWSWEEK EDITION DATED
AUGUST 29, 1977:

ON THE FACE OF IT, HUA AND HIS PRINCIPAL COLLEAGUES --
DEFENSE MINISTER YEH CHIEN-YING, 80, AND TENG HSIAO-PING,
73, THE TWICE-RESURRECTED VICE PREMIER -- PRESIDE OVER A
STRONGLY ENTRENCHED AND RESOLUTELY PRAGMATIC GOVERNMENT.
THEIR TRIUMPH OVER THE RADICAL "GANG OF FOUR" AND THEIR
ALLIANCE WITH EACH OTHER MAY NOT ACTUALLY BE ALL THAT SOLID.
BUT FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST, THE TRIUMVIRATE HAS PUT
CHINA'S HOUSE IN ORDER AND STANDS READY TO DEAL WITH THE
OUTSIDE WORLD. THE FIRST CALLER, SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS
VANCE, ARRIVES EARLY THIS WEEK. AFTER THE DISAPPOINTMENTS
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OF VANCE'S EARLIER MISSIONS TO MOSCOW AND THE MIDDLE EAST,
ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS TOOK PAINS LAST WEEK TO STRESS
THAT NO MAJOR BREAKTHROUGH WOULD OCCUR IN PEKING. NONETHE-
LESS, IT WILL BE A MOMENTOUS MEETING FOR BOTH CHINA AND THE
U.S.

SEVEN MONTHS INTO THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION, AND FIVE YEARS

AFTER RICHARD NIXON'S "OPENING" TO CHINA, ALMOST NO PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE TOWARD FULL DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES. THE MAIN STUMBLING BLOCK IS THE U.S. COMMITMENT TO THE NATIONALIST CHINESE GOVERNMENT ON TAIWAN. SOME OF CARTER'S ADVISERS ARE URGING HIM TO CUT THE LINK WITH TAIWAN AND MOVE RAPIDLY TOWARD "NORMALIZATION" WITH PEKING. OTHERS, NOTING THAT CARTER ALREADY FACES POLITICAL TROUBLE AT HOME OVER HIS INITIATIVES ON PANAMA, KOREA, THE MIDDLE EAST AND ARMS CONTROL, WANT THE PRESIDENT TO MOVE MORE SLOWLY. THIS WEEK VANCE COULD REACH AGREEMENTS WITH CHINA ON MINOR MATTERS, BUT THE MAIN PURPOSE OF HIS "EXPLORATORY" MISSION IS TO SEE WHAT OPTIONS, IF ANY, ARE AVAILABLE ON THE TAIWAN ISSUE.

VANCE HAD RETURNED FROM HIS MIDDLE EAST TRIP VISIBLY EXHAUSTED. THE LACK OF PROGRESS DURING THAT MISSION AND THE EARLIER VISIT TO MOSCOW FOR ARMS TALKS MADE SOME OF HIS COLLEAGUES WORRY THAT VANCE WAS TRAVELING TOO MUCH AND PRODUCING TOO LITTLE. CLEARLY VANCE IS NOT AS DRAMATIC A DIPLOMAT AS HENRY KISSINGER, AND BEFORE THE OTHER TRIPS SOME OF HIS ASSOCIATES, INCLUDING JIMMY CARTER, SEEMED TO PROMISE MORE THAN HE COULD DELIVER. VANCE'S SPIRITS HAD REVIVED BY THE TIME HE LEFT FOR TOKYO AND PEKING, BUT STILL ONE AIDE DETECTED "AN ELEMENT OF MALAISE" IN HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD ANOTHER ARDUOUS TRIP THAT WAS UNLIKELY TO PRODUCE DRAMATIC RESULTS.... CHRISTOPHER UNCLASSIFIED

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